Session 50 - The Tribulation

What is the Tribulation? When will the tribulation take place? What is its duration? Will believers be raptured before the tribulation?

1. What is the Tribulation?
   1. The scriptures speak of a general tribulation of the world, a specific tribulation for Christians, and a and a great tribulation
      1. The general tribulation of the world are the signs attending the last days, which began after Jesus’ ascension. When scripture speaks of the signs attending the last days, famines, pestilences, wars, etc., it is speaking of a sort of tribulation perceived and suffered by all mankind.
      2. The specific tribulation of all christians/the church is the evil forces that attack the faithful. The devil, the world, and our sinful flesh are always at work to attack us and tempt us to abandon our faith in Jesus Christ.
      3. The great tribulation refers to the time immediately before Christ comes again, when Satan is loosed, the man of lawlessness/antichrist is revealed, and there is a mass apostasy and rebellion against the faith.
2. When will the tribulation take place?
   1. The general tribulation of the world has always taken place since the fall. Jesus seems to mention it with regard to the last days to indicate that his death and resurrection has not undone the fallen nature of the world. That will happen in his second coming to bring a new creation.
   2. The specific tribulation of the church has been happening since the church’s inception at Pentecost.
   3. The great tribulation will take place approximately near to Jesus’ coming again. However, the corrupt nature of the world, and our dim sight have made christians unable to perceive, naturally or spiritually whether the great apostasy has happened or the antichirst sufficiently revealed. Moreover, God has not revealed the appointed day of Jesus’ return, neither are we to anticipate the day or the hour. We are to always be ready, as if he could return this very hour.
3. What is its duration?
   1. All tribulation will last until Jesus comes again.
4. Will believers be raptured before the tribulation?
   1. No. Believers will be caught up with Christ on the day of his return, which is the day of the final judgment.
      1. 16For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.” (1 Thes. 4:16-17).